



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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**GOV. EASLEY MEETS WITH U.S. SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY**  
*Discusses the State's Preparedness Efforts for 2006 Hurricane Season*

**RALEIGH** – Gov. Easley today met with Michael Chertoff, secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, to discuss North Carolina's emergency preparedness plans for the 2006 hurricane season. Chertoff is meeting with the governors of hurricane-prone states across the nation.

"North Carolina ranks just behind Florida as the state with the most hurricanes," said Easley. "While we like being No. 1 for business climate, we would prefer a lower designation for severe weather. But, the good news is that, because of our past history, we have teams of experienced emergency responders at both the state and local level."

Easley told Chertoff that the state has a well practiced and established emergency response system. The Governor said officials know the importance of making evacuation decisions early, especially on the Outer Banks, the barrier islands and inland areas that flood.

"Our State Emergency Response Team is activated early on and gets their people and equipment in place to move in as soon as the storm is over to help the locals," said Easley. "Right now, our N.C. Emergency Management personnel are working with local officials to make sure all their plans are in place, shelters are identified and the local governments are ready to respond in the event that a storm chooses our state in its path."

The Governor told Chertoff that state and local officials have good working relationships with FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security. Before a storm hits, North Carolina already has an advance team on the ground to help expedite federal assistance.

"Today's meeting ensures that this good relationship will continue," said Easley. "As prepared as we are, a strong storm will require a strong federal response and Secretary Chertoff has assured me that they are ready to help. No government agency can do it alone."

"It takes the local, state and federal agencies, and the disaster volunteer organizations working together, for things to go smoothly. With the networks that we have in place, which have been enhanced today, North Carolina citizens should know that we are ready for whatever Mother Nature might send our way." For information on hurricane preparedness, go to the Web site [www.readync.org](http://www.readync.org).

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